

## 29 *The First Storm Over Russia*

can accept your promise and drop this case for a time. But I must tell you our decision on your proscribed list as a whole. An active boycott is a threat of violence, and the Board of Professors will reply to the first attempt of violence against any professor by closing the University. This decision is irrevocable."

Next day I went to Dr. N. and asked him for the evidence against Professor Georgievsky. He seemed embarrassed and refused to testify before the students' meeting. "Do not ruin me," he implored. "There are serious reasons why I cannot appear."

Beside myself with anger, I replied, "I understand your reasons and shall not call you as a witness. I shall simply announce in the general meeting that your charge against Georgievsky proved to be slander."

I reported the results of my visit to the Students' Council. The effect was as if a hand grenade had exploded on the Council's round table. Dr. N. was one of the minor leaders of the left wing of the Academic Union. Unmasking him would be a severe blow for his group. The "moderate" members of the Council implored me not to reveal the source of the charges against Georgievsky. Finally, I promised that I would not name Dr. N. if I could persuade the meeting to withdraw Georgievsky's name from the proscribed list.

Engel presided at the general meeting. My report about the reaction of the professors to our requests for the invitation of new professors did not cause much excitement. When I told of our agreement to abstain from an active boycott of reactionary professors until the accusation against each one of them was proved individually, the audience answered with loud catcalls.

"I know how you will hiss when I tell you the reason for our surrender," I shouted. "We surrendered because we realized that the decision of the general meeting was unjust. The condemned did not get a fair trial. . . ." And I pleaded for the revocation of the entire proscribed list, including Georgievsky, on the basis of procedural errors and lack of evidence. The meeting ended with a unanimous vote of confidence in the Council. An investigating committee was appointed and the whole affair was shelved.

The professors were satisfied with our regard for their interpretation of academic freedom. But they also realized we would be conciliatory in academic questions only as long as we could use the University for revolutionary purposes but that we would become adamant if the Board of Professors interfered with our political activities. Thus the compromise was confirmed: science in the morning, revolution after dusk. The University remained in the hands of revolutionary students until the showdown that marked the climax and turning point in the revolution.